Formation of Shaheed Sardar Bhagat Singh Birth Centenary Committee

746. SHRI TARLOCHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal in PMO to form a Shaheed Sardar Bhagat Singh Birth Centenary Committee under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister; and

(b) whether Government have requested Pakistan Government to allow Centenary functions at his birth place in Pakistan and also to have memorials in Lahore where he shot the police officer to avenge the death of Lala Lajpat Rai and where he was hanged?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) A National Committee under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister has been constituted to commemorate, amongst others, the Birth Centenary of Shaheed Sardar Bhagat Singh.

(b) No, Sir.

Beautification of Safdarjung Tomb

747. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under consideration of Archaeological Survey of India to beautify Safdarjung Tomb and its surroundings in collaboration with New Delhi Municipal Council, so as to make it worthy of visits by tourists both Indians and foreigners; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when the Tomb would be opened for visits by tourists?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Yes, Sir. The Archaeological Survey of India has a proposal to restore the Safdarjung Tomb and beautify its surroundings. The NDMC has been requested to hand over the land infront of the monument for landscaping and maintenance.

(b) The structural conservation of the main tomb, entrance gateway and enclosure wall, revitalization of the garden and environmental

development of the area infront of the tomb are the important works planned at the monument. There is also a proposal to illuminate the monument during night.

The monument is already open for the tourists. The proposed works are expected to be completed in an year's time.

Restoration of world heritage site status to Hampi

748. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after UNESCO has awarded the 'danger' status to Hampi Heritage site in 1999, several agencies launched restoration schemes but none has managed to pull Hampi out of ruins;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the two bridges across the Tungabhadra river, construction of modern buildings around the monument, large scale encroachments, all within the core heritage area are under scrutiny if Hampi has to regain its WHS (World Heritage Site) status and remain a beneficiary of UNESCO's conservation expertise and the World Bank's funds; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have proposed to take to restore its World Heritage Site status?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Hampi was inscribed in the list of World Heritage in danger in 1999 due to construction of two bridges across the river Tungabhadra which threatened the integrity of the site. A number of UNESCO missions had visited the site since then and suggested corrective measures which were implemented by the State Government of Karnataka and the Central Government.

(b) and (c) The corrective measures undertaken include dismantling of the pylons of the foot bridge, construction of a bypass road to divert heavy traffic from the heritage area and enforcement of traffic regulations, enactment of a legislation for management of the Hampi Heritage Site, constitution of Hampi Heritage Area Management Authority, removal of encroachments and formulation of a site management plan.

The corrective measures implemented were reported to the World Heritage Committee, and in their 30th Session held at Vilnius, Lithuania